

Prototypical hardscape plaza



Prototypical Downtown square



Prototypical Neighborhood Park



Street trees green urban sidewalks

Results from both the Visual Preference Survey™ and the Vision Translation Workshop were nearly unanimous in expressing a desire for more Downtown landscaping. The most positive images clearly indicate the importance of a green street as the primary landscape experience. The survey images also indicate the preferred intensity of green. The most positive image illustrates a sidewalk lined with large trees, hedges, and planters of flowers. Another strongly positive image depicts a green street. Workshop participants identified two approaches toward "greening" Downtown; the first was to create urban parks, the second was to connect parks and open spaces through extensive streetscape elements.

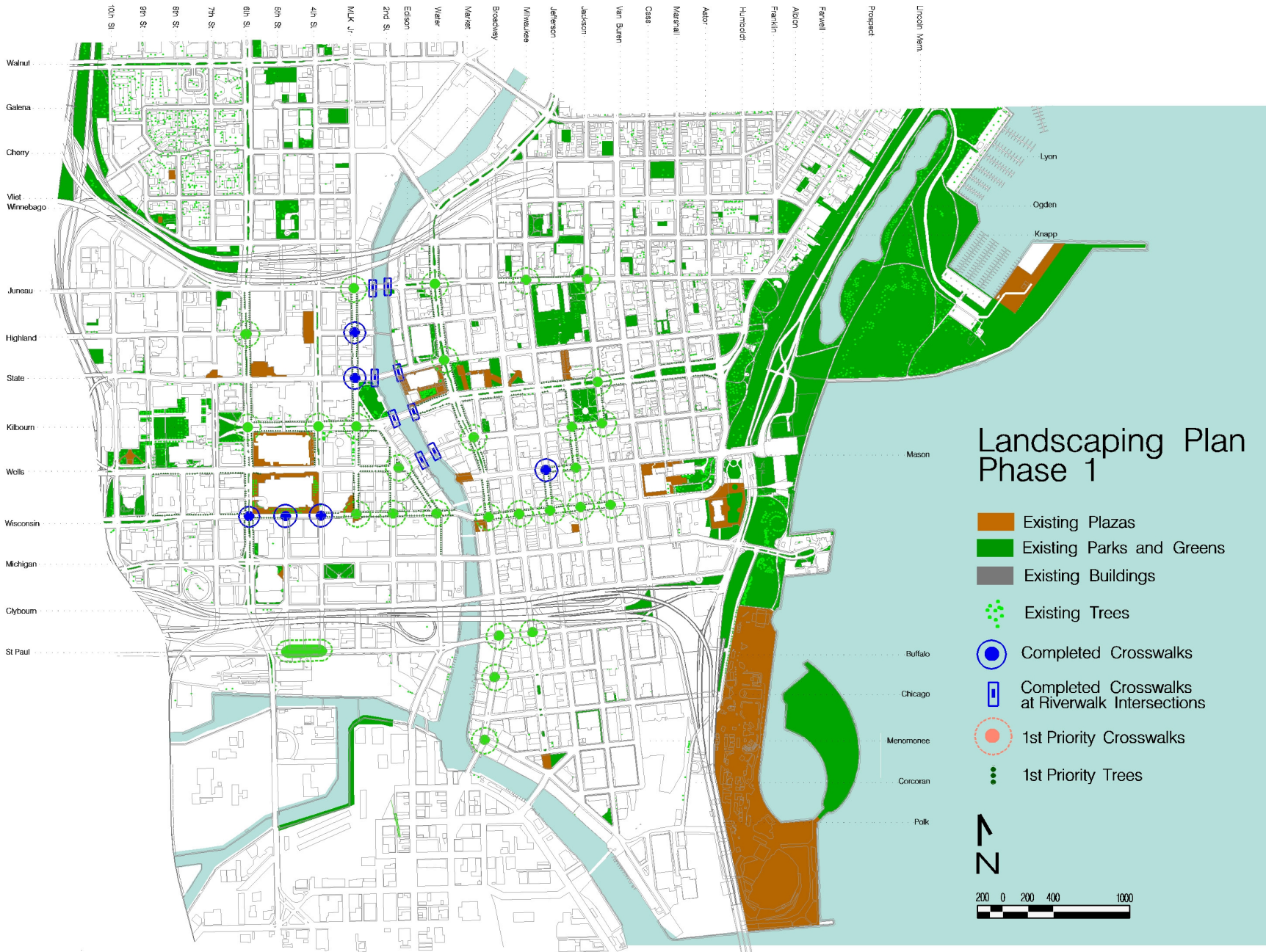
Important components of livable cities are the street trees, flowers, ground cover and water features that humanize and enhance the experience of living and working Downtown. Milwaukee has locations with excellent landscaping, others need improvement. Therefore, the landscaping plan has three goals. The first goal is to green Downtown with more parks linked through streets lined with trees. The second goal is to provide different types of parks and open

spaces in proportion to the Downtown population. The third is to landscape with a range of native plants and flowers that add color and diversify life Downtown.

Cities should contain parks, plazas and recreation areas in proportion to the number of people living and working downtown. The National Recreation and Park Association suggests that the minimum urban park system should provide between 6.25 and 10.5 acres of developed open space per 1,000 residents. With an approximate population of 7,200, Downtown currently contains 27 acres per 1,000 people. Unfortunately, one of the largest parks, the Festival grounds with approximately 62 acres, is not available for much of the year.

The plan proposes a total of approximately 238 acres of parks and plazas. If the population increases as the plan projects to 27,200, the plan will provide 9 acres per 1,000 people. This is within the Park Association's minimum standards. However, if the Festival grounds are removed from this total, the provision of parks drops to 6.5 acres per 1000 people suggesting the importance of street greening.





The Plan

The Landscape Plan proposes locations for parks, plazas and street trees that link the public spaces.

Phasing

A phased Landscape Plan is recommended. The first phase indicates those street edges that require immediate attention and that build upon the current streetscape improvements. The criteria used for the location of first phase landscape improvements includes:

- Sidewalks with a high pedestrian volume.
- Building edges that are not highly susceptible to future change.
- Buildings that have recently been completed or are about to be redeveloped.
- Recommended catalytic project areas like Wisconsin Avenue, etc.
- Streets recommended as future boulevards.
- Street edges that will not be reconfigured to install the downtown circulator.
- Trolley stops.
- Locations that will create a continuous streetscape experience linking larger open spaces together.
- Capitalizing upon previously improved intersections.

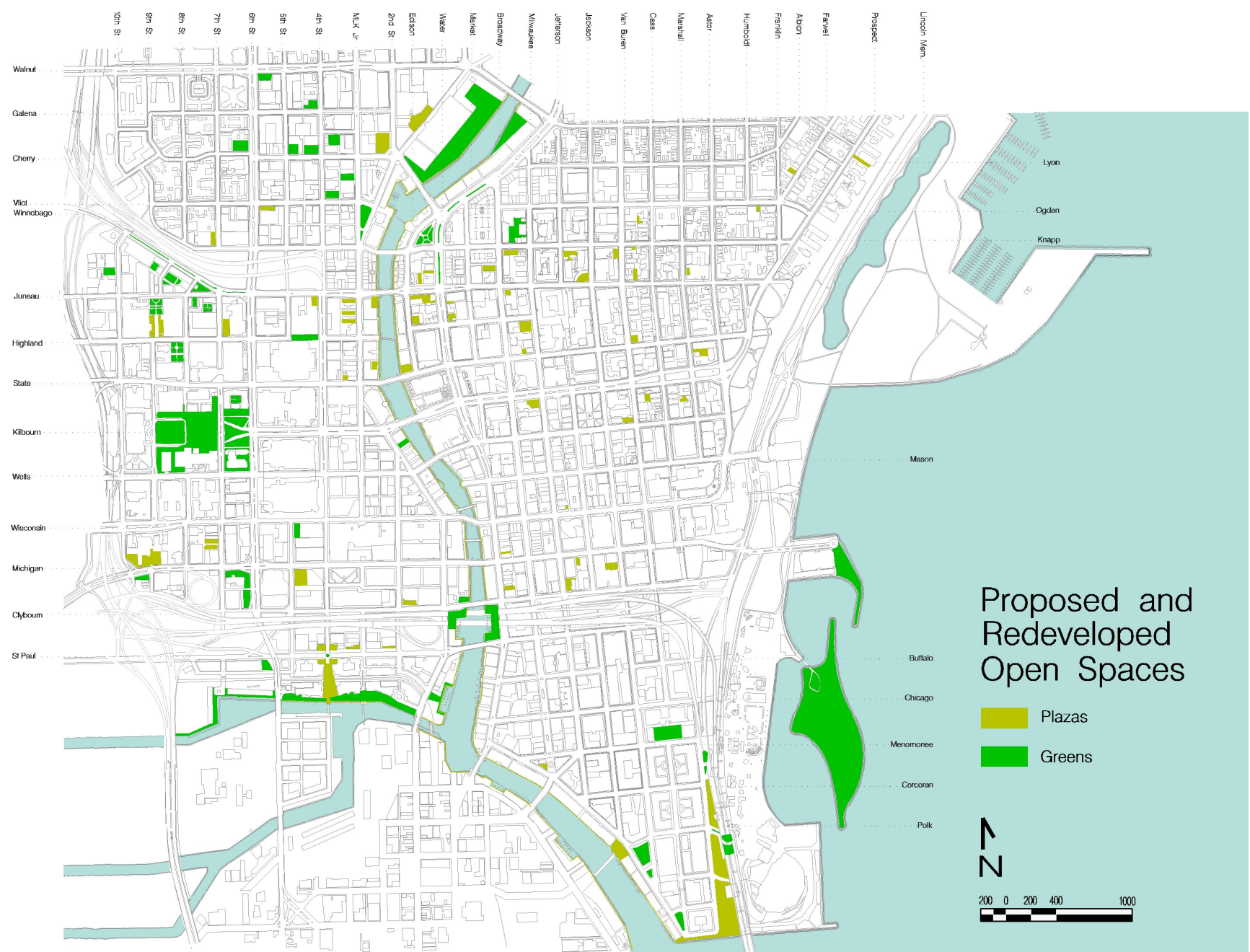
The first phase landscape improvements should focus on the streets with the highest visibility. The central median of high volume streets should be planted

- Kilbourn Avenue
- 6th Street

The important commercial streets and pedestrian connections must be strengthened

- The Midwest Express Convention Center, Pere Marquette Park and Wisconsin Avenue improvements on Wisconsin Avenue.
- Water Street and connector streets such as 2nd and Plankinton.
- Jefferson Street between Wisconsin Avenue and Cathedral Square.





Urban Landscape Types

Parks and plazas are important gathering places within the urban environment. People want parks for playing, relaxing or walking. Downtown Milwaukee can provide opportunities for all of these activities in combination with all other urban amenities. The plan recommends a variety of green space types that appeal to a broad range of ages and needs. The landscape experience should be continuous connecting the parks, rivers and lake through tree-lined streets. The street tree planting area, the parkway, is the continuation of the park along city streets.

Several types of urban landscapes are proposed. The types range from small residential spaces to the enhancement of the regional Lakefront Park.

Private Open Space

The smallest urban open space, the balcony, literally integrates internal and external spaces. The plan suggests that apartment units have a minimum of 64 square feet of balcony or terrace. Roof gardens are also desired. Some of the residential building types incorporate internal courtyards. Townhouses will have backyards.

Neighborhood Parks and Plazas

Neighborhood parks provide a medium size open space. These parks or plazas should be located throughout Downtown to provide all residences open space within a five-minute walk. Neighborhood parks will be the centers of the neighborhoods within the North End District.

Neighborhood parks provide playgrounds for children through early elementary grades. They are the neighborhood gathering spots for passive activities and casual meetings.

City Parks and Plazas

City parks and plazas make a civic statement through their wider appeal. These spaces may accommodate sizable numbers of people and activ-



Miller Plaza, Chattanooga Tennessee



ities. They are designed for flexible uses. Special programmed events will draw attendance from regional distances, while the location in the midst of office buildings encourages daily casual use. There are five classic parks in Downtown: Cathedral Square, Ziedler Park, Pere Marquette Park, Red Arrow Park and MacArthur Square. Currently these parks are heavily use during the warmer weather when employee's lunch outside and events are programmed. Winter carnivals and activities should be programmed for these parks to encourage year long attendance; conversion of Red Arrow Park into a skating rink will begin this process.

The citywide appeal of these parks will be demonstrated through their size, filling an entire city block. They are defined on all sides by important streets. As important civic statements they should be designed with appropriate materials and public art. As the centers of the Central District neighborhoods, these parks and plazas will emphatically project Milwaukee's civic image beyond the city limits.

MacArthur Square

The plan recommends redevelopment of the under-utilized MacArthur Square so that it may achieve its civic potential. Ninth Street should be brought to grade to make the square accessible from the north side. The gravel path circumscribing the central square should be redesigned to allow traffic and limited parking. Pedestrian paths are proposed to cross the square providing convenient circulation. Benches offer casual seating. Three sets of monumental stairs accommodate the grade changes between 6th Street and the County Court House.

Water Street Park

A new triangular park is proposed as an urban design element in the Park East redevelopment. Water Street, Mc Kinley and Edison frame the park. The park should be architecturally defined with new buildings. A mixed-use entertainment complex will be located on Water Street. Mixed-use Riverfront buildings will be along Edison Street. Four to six story mixed-use residential buildings could line Knapp Street. An important building will terminate the north end of the park at Water and Cherry Streets. With this new park the proposed residential infill buildings will have adequate access to open space. The concept design proposes this block of Water Street present a continuous, special paving treatment from the entertainment center to the edge of the park. At times of special events the street can be closed to allow for large gatherings. The pedestrian connections between the park and the River should be paved in the same special material.

If the elevated I-794 is removed a new civic park is recommended between Saint Paul, Kilbourn, Van Buren and Jackson. These streets should receive special landscape treatment.

Union Station Plaza

If the Post Office site becomes available for redevelopment, the plan suggests a multi-modal mixed-use project. The primary entrance would focus on a new plaza. The plaza begins on Saint Paul Street and continues through the building across to the river. A floor that retracts when trains approach and reappears when the train leaves might be considered to extend the pedestrian realm. The corridor could be covered with a glass arcade, a winter garden for Milwaukee. This glass arcade connects to an extension of the RiverWalk. A pedestrian bridge is proposed to connect across to the opposite side of the River. This plaza will be the center of the Union Station neighborhood.

Regional Parks

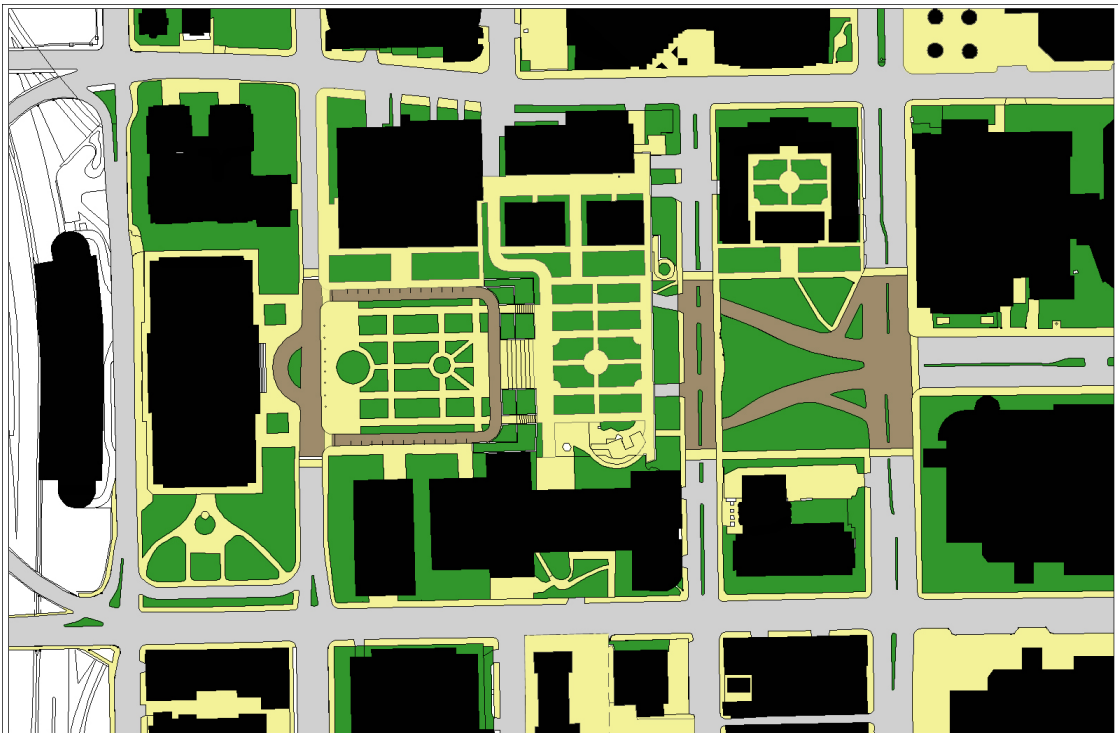
The Lakefront Park is the largest park setting in Downtown containing the McKinley Marina, play fields, the Milwaukee Art Museum and extension,



Jazz in the Park



Lake District

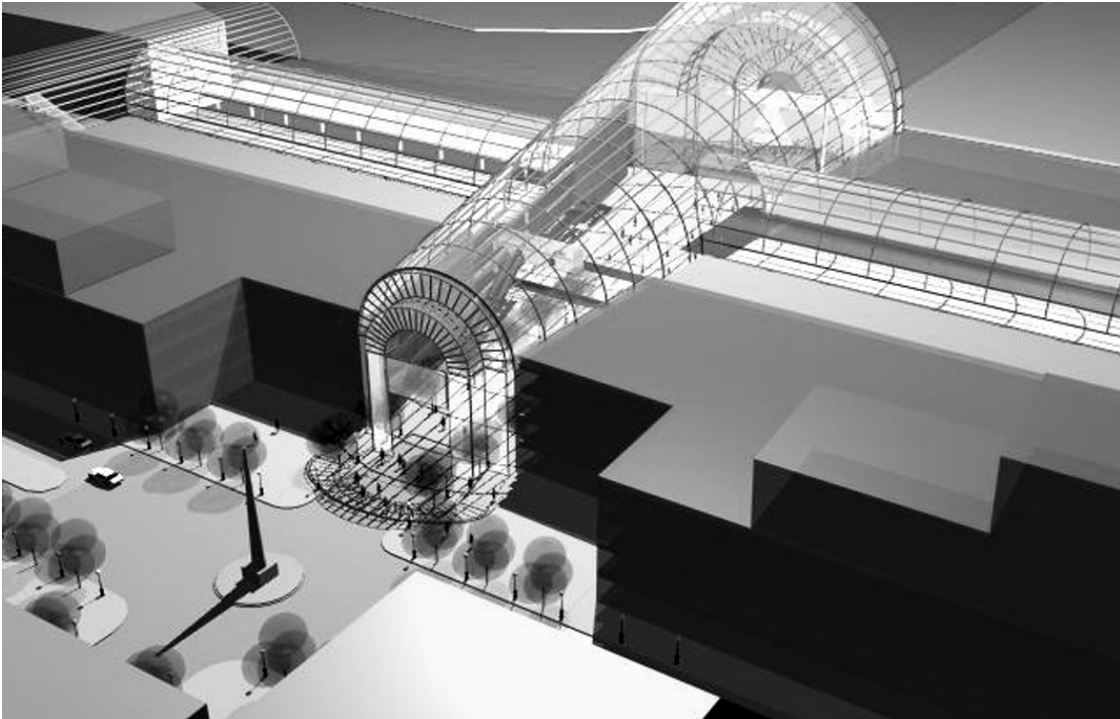


Proposed Mc Arthur Square



Proposed Water Street Park





Proposed Union Station Plaza

the War Memorial, and the redeveloped North Harbor Park. Legislation dictates that the park remain in public use. It is both Downtown's back and front yards.

The Landscape Plan endorses the plan prepared by JJR Inc. for the reconfiguration of the Harbor Island and the municipal pier into a new harbor for small boats, transient craft, charter boats, and historic schooners. The plan creates an attractive Lake Walk. This redesign will complement the park and create an additional attraction and open space feature for the Downtown. The only reservation to the plan is the large surface parking lot on the municipal pier.

The Henry W. Maier Festival Park occupies the remainder of the Downtown's lakefront. This cultural park attracts over 1.7 million visitors annually. The plan anticipates the expansion of the festival grounds under the freeway with an extension of Cass Street becoming the new urban edge. Because of the large number of pedestrians passing here, this edge requires a new fence and landscape treatment.

The Plan proposes that the entire length of the Lake Walk be accessible throughout the year, not just during the Festivals.



Riverwalk is an important contribution to the open space network

RiverWalk

RiverWalk is a linear plaza/park running through the core of Downtown, a seam uniting the two urban sides of the River. This civic plaza provides important locations for festivals and public art. It promotes a positive Downtown image far beyond the city limits. Continuation of the RiverWalk in the Third Ward will contribute significantly to the revitalization of those neighborhoods. This portion should continue under the Hoan Bridge and connect with the Lake Walk. A pedestrian bridge should link the Lake Walk to the southern end of the Harbor Island. This would allow a continuous walk along the Lake when the Summerfest grounds are closed.

The Third Ward section establishes a good precedent in allowing the District to construct the walk with locally appropriate design standards. This example should be followed in other expansions. The Downtown Plan proposes that the RiverWalk be extended along Walker's Point and in front of Union Station.



Street trees create green corridors

Green Streets

A very important component of the landscaping plan is the linkage between parks. Survey and workshop participants expressed strong preferences for greening the city. In addition to new parks and the enhancement of existing open spaces, this will be accomplished through street trees planted along all streets. Trees can be planted in the parkway (between curb and sidewalk) either in the ground or in planters. The parkway is the extension of the park into urban fabric of the City. All Downtown streets can accommodate street trees in the parkway. Tree planting will provide a design challenge where there are hollow sidewalks and extensive underground infrastructure. Street tree improvements should be coordinated with lighting and crosswalk improvements.

Green corridors can achieve several visual effects. The abundance of green streets will enhance the overall perception of a green city. Linear green corridors can focus on an important point of visual termination, thereby linking the two ends. Green corridors can also provide pleasing views across an important park.

Wide streets with excessive rights-of-way may be



greened by planting trees in the center. This is recommended primarily where concrete medians already exist. However, median planting should never be done if it requires street widening.

Unfortunately, these locations have never been accurately mapped; consequently, the Plan can only make general recommendations. Where in ground planting is prevented because of in ground obstructions, large planter pots are recommended.

An old post card of Grand Avenue (western Wisconsin Avenue) testifies to Milwaukee’s classic streetscape heritage. The Plan recommends that streets with concrete medians be retrofitted to include street trees. For example, 6th Street presents an extraordinary opportunity for transformation.

Kilbourn is an important street that links the City and County civic precincts. Streetscape enhancements will visually link the East and West sides of the River. The central median and parkways from the River to the lake would benefit from enhanced landscaping. A consistent tree line with appropriately scaled light poles and banners are recommended. The Plan proposes that West Kilbourn be planted to frame the axial view of the Milwaukee County Courthouse complex. Newly designed pedestrian crosswalks should be installed. The center median should be heavily planted with flowers and low ground cover; plantings must not obstruct the view of the County Court House. New trees, higher light poles with double Harp fixtures and banners should be installed.

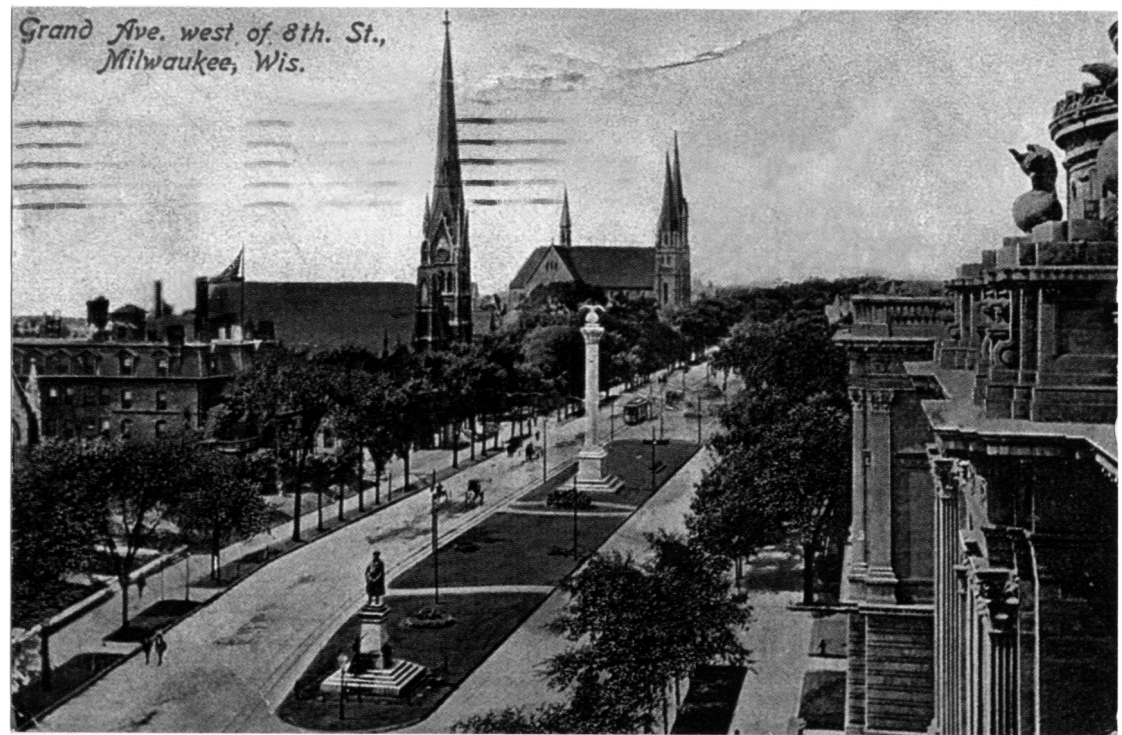
Dramatic landscape improvements are recommended on Wisconsin Avenue. Because the street and sidewalk widths vary between East and West Wisconsin Avenue, each side of the river will require specialized greening. The plan proposes both in-ground plantings and curb extensions to accommodate new trees where the hollow sidewalks prevent planting. Where neither of these is possible, large planters are recommended. Sidewalk expansion beyond the limit of the hollow sidewalks is recommended.

East Wisconsin Avenue has a wider street width. On this portion of the street, sidewalk expansion to accommodate street trees is recommended. This will reduce the street width and facilitate pedestrian crossings.

The Downtown Plan recommends that Water Street receive streetscape improvements. Sidewalks should be widened at the northern end to accommodate increased pedestrian activity resulting from the entertainment venues. Trees should be planted and appropriate pedestrian lighting should be installed. The current median treatment along sections of Water Street should be maintained pending a final decision on the downtown circulator.

Freeway landscaping

Specific landscaping treatment is recommended to improve the pedestrian linkages underneath I-794. Several cities in the United States have done excellent jobs of landscaping under the freeway particularly adjacent to those areas where pedestrian traffic is expected.



A historic view of Wisconsin Avenue as a green corridor



Kilbourn Street proposed redevelopment as a boulevard

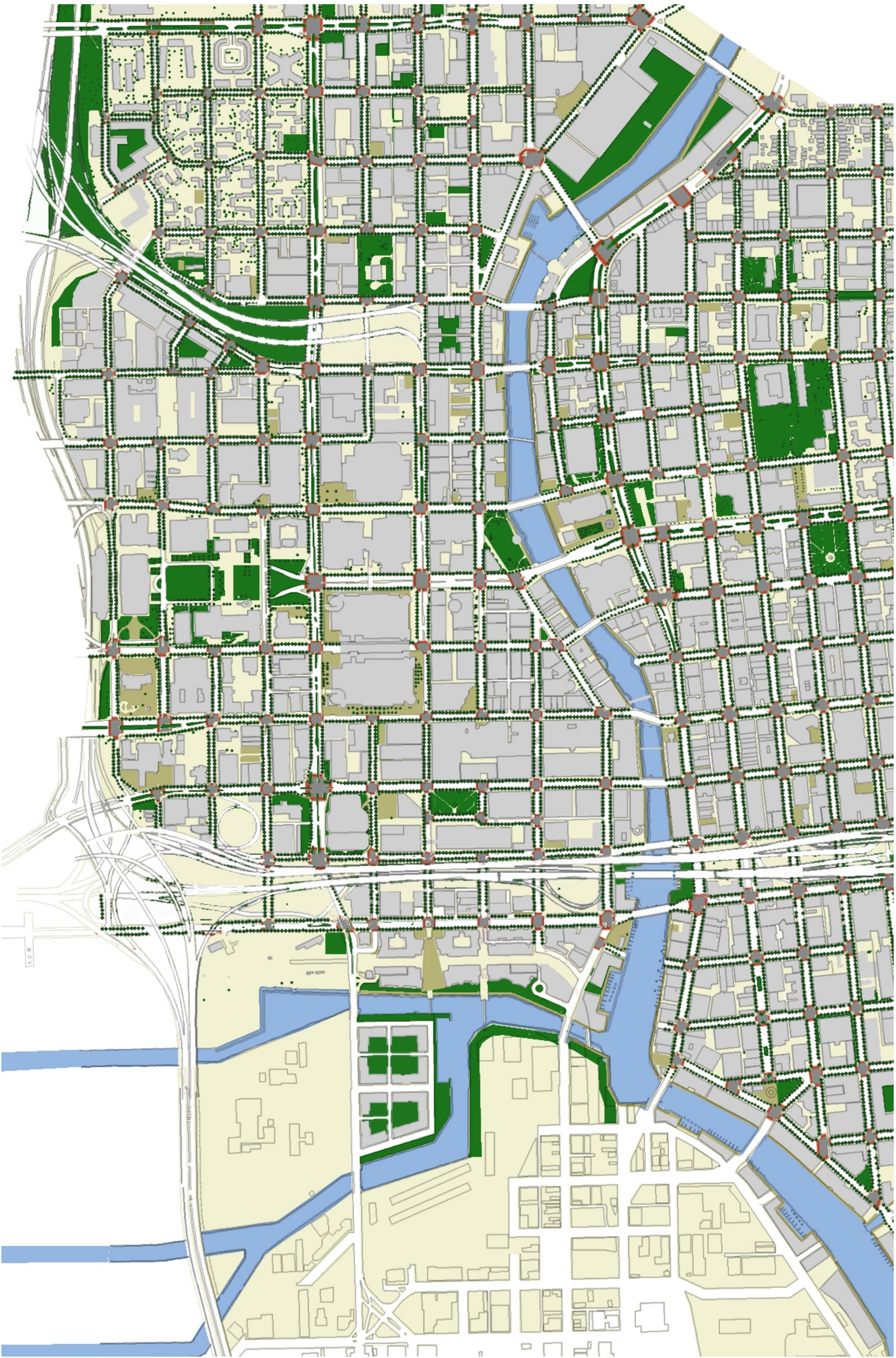


Existing condition of Kilbourn Street in 1999



Freeway Landscaping - Sacramento, California







Walnut